

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for delivering interactive non-intrusive advertising content, the method comprising:  
  
5 receiving a selection signal indicating that a user has selected an item displayed on a television screen, wherein the item has associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content;  
  
responsive to receiving the selection signal, identifying the selected item; and  
10 displaying the associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving and storing advertising data that associates the selected item with a screen region and with interactive advertising content.
3. The method of claim 2 wherein receiving the advertising data comprises receiving the advertising data encoded in a video signal that includes a video image of the item.
4. The method of claim 2 wherein the advertising data is encoded in a digital data stream separate from a video signal and receiving the advertising data comprises receiving the data stream through a digital network.

- 5     5.     The method of claim 2 wherein the advertising data includes instructions for control of the display of interactive non-intrusive advertising content for the item.
6.     The method of claim 1 further comprising:
- 5     receiving one or more designation signals, wherein each designation signal represents an instruction to designate an item having associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content;
- 10     responsive to receiving each designation signal, designating singly, as a currently designated item, each of a multiplicity of items having associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content;
- 10     wherein identifying the selected item comprises identifying as the selected item the currently designated item.
7.     The method of claim 6 wherein designating singly each of a multiplicity of items further comprises logically designating an item and visually designating an item.
8.     The method of claim 7 wherein logically designating an item comprises setting a designation data element in advertising data for the item.
9.     The method of claim 7 wherein visually designating an item comprises displaying descriptive text for the item.

10. The method of claim 4 wherein visually designating an item comprises  
5 changing a video display of the item.
11. The method of claim 1 further comprising tracking a cursor position on the  
television screen, wherein identifying the selected item comprises identifying  
the selected item in dependence upon the cursor position when the selection  
signal is received.  
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12. The method of claim 1 further wherein identifying the selected item in  
dependence upon the cursor position further comprises determining whether  
the cursor position is within a screen region associated with the item.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein the interactive advertising content comprises a  
web page describing the item and offering an on-line sale of the item.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein displaying the associated non-intrusive  
interactive advertising content comprises downloading a web page from a  
remote web site identified in a link associated with the selected item.

15. A system for delivering interactive non-intrusive advertising content, the system comprising:

5 means for receiving a selection signal indicating that a user has selected an item displayed on a television screen, wherein the item has associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content;

operable in response to receiving the selection signal, means for identifying the selected item; and

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means for displaying the associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content.

16. The system of claim 15 further comprising means for receiving and means for storing advertising data that associates the selected item with a screen region and with interactive advertising content.

17. The system of claim 16 wherein means for receiving the advertising data comprises means for receiving the advertising data encoded in a video signal that includes a video image of the item.

18. The system of claim 16 wherein the advertising data is encoded in a digital data stream separate from a video signal and means for receiving the advertising data comprises means for receiving the data stream through a digital network.

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19. The system of claim 16 wherein the advertising data includes instructions for

control of the display of interactive non-intrusive advertising content for the item.

20. The system of claim 15 further comprising:

means for receiving one or more designation signals, wherein each designation signal represents an instruction to designate an item having associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content;

operable in response to receiving each designation signal, means for designating singly, as a currently designated item, each of a multiplicity of items having associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content;

wherein means for identifying the selected item comprises means for identifying as the selected item the currently designated item.

21. The system of claim 20 wherein means for designating singly each of a multiplicity of items further comprises means for logically designating an item and means for visually designating an item.
22. The system of claim 21 wherein means for logically designating an item comprises means for setting a designation data element in advertising data for the item.
23. The system of claim 21 wherein means for visually designating an item comprises means for displaying descriptive text for the item.

24. The system of claim 21 wherein means for visually designating an item  
5 comprises means for changing a video display of the item.
25. The system of claim 15 further comprising means for tracking a cursor  
position on the television screen, wherein means for identifying the selected  
item comprises means for identifying the selected item in dependence upon  
the cursor position when the selection signal is received.  
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26. The system of claim 15 further wherein means for identifying the selected  
item in dependence upon the cursor position further comprises means for  
determining whether the cursor position is within a screen region associated  
with the item.  
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27. The system of claim 15 wherein the interactive advertising content comprises  
a web page describing the item and offering an on-line sale of the item.
28. The system of claim 15 wherein means for displaying the associated non-  
intrusive interactive advertising content comprises means for downloading a  
web page from a remote web site identified in a link associated with the  
selected item.

29. A computer program product for delivering interactive non-intrusive advertising content, the computer program product comprising:

a recording medium;

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means, recorded on the recording medium, for receiving a selection signal indicating that a user has selected an item displayed on a television screen, wherein the item has associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content;

- 10 operable in response to receiving the selection signal, means, recorded on the recording medium, for identifying the selected item; and

means, recorded on the recording medium, for displaying the associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content.

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30. The computer program product of claim 29 further comprising means, recorded on the recording medium, for receiving and means, recorded on the recording medium, for storing advertising data that associates the selected item with a screen region and with interactive advertising content.

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31. The computer program product of claim 30 wherein means for receiving the advertising data comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for receiving the advertising data encoded in a video signal that includes a video image of the item.

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32. The computer program product of claim 30 wherein the advertising data is encoded in a digital data stream separate from a video signal and means for

receiving the advertising data comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for receiving the data stream through a digital network.

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33. The computer program product of claim 30 wherein the advertising data includes instructions for control of the display of interactive non-intrusive advertising content for the item.

34. The computer program product of claim 29 further comprising:

means, recorded on the recording medium, for receiving one or more designation signals, wherein each designation signal represents an instruction to designate an item having associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content;

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operable in response to receiving each designation signal, means, recorded on the recording medium, for designating singly, as a currently designated item, each of a multiplicity of items having associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content;

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wherein means for identifying the selected item comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for identifying as the selected item the currently designated item.

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35. The computer program product of claim 34 wherein means for designating singly each of a multiplicity of items further comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for logically designating an item and means, recorded on the recording medium, for visually designating an item.



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36. The computer program product of claim 35 wherein means for logically designating an item comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for setting a designation data element in advertising data for the item.

37. The computer program product of claim 35 wherein means for visually designating an item comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for displaying descriptive text for the item.

38. The computer program product of claim 35 wherein means for visually designating an item comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for changing a video display of the item.

39. The computer program product of claim 29 further comprising means, recorded on the recording medium, for tracking a cursor position on the television screen, wherein means for identifying the selected item comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for identifying the selected item in dependence upon the cursor position when the selection signal is received.

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40. The computer program product of claim 29 further wherein means for identifying the selected item in dependence upon the cursor position further comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for determining whether the cursor position is within a screen region associated with the item.

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41. The computer program product of claim 29 wherein the interactive advertising content comprises a web page describing the item and offering an on-line sale of the item.

42. The computer program product of claim 29 wherein means for displaying the associated non-intrusive interactive advertising content comprises means, recorded on the recording medium, for downloading a web page from a remote web site identified in a link associated with the selected item.